

The Girls May Be Comforting But Won't They Leave Even Less Time for Fighting?

"Air strikes in North Vietnam have both good and bad effects. Generally speaking, they have vastly improved South Vietnamese morale, but in some units feeling has risen that there is no point in risking death in combat because the war will be won by strikes on the north. . . . A further problem that continues to plague American advisers is the Vietnamese reluctance to fight at night unless

attacked. . . . Some commanders have been successful in keeping their troops away from their families, but too often the troops fight what amounts to white collar working hours, going home to their wife and children at night. Some officers, including Americans, propose providing 'comfort girls' if necessary to keep the troops in the field long enough to be effective."

—Arthur Dommen from Saigon to the London Observer Foreign Service in the Washington Post, April 11.

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15 CENTS

Half Barry Goldwater, Half Billy Graham

If Mr. Johnson were still running for election, his speech at Baltimore would have been admirably designed for maximum vote-getting. It was half Barry Goldwater and half Billy Graham. The first half was fiercely uncompromising enough to bring cheers from such journalistic war-hawks as Joe Alsop, David Lawrence and Wm. S. White. The second half was as full of Christian piety as a revival sermon, and has brought sighs of relief from substantial sections of the peace movement. Only Senators Morse and Gruening (see pps. 2-3) were not taken in by it.

Both "Doves" and "Hawks" Cooed

The reactions in the Senate were otherwise a tribute to Mr. Johnson's genius at sleight of hand. There it was welcomed by a "dove" like Church of Idaho and a few minutes later by a "hawk" like Tower of Texas. Next day Douglas of Illinois, American liberalism's gift to Chiang Kai-shek, haled its unrelenting hostility toward China while Mansfield of Montana was praising it for "humanity and conciliation." Just before the speech was delivered, unnameable Administration spokesmen were assuring the foreign press and the *hoi polloi* of our own, though not for attribution, that the speech was a turn toward peace talks. But at private sessions later for hard-line U.S. commentators emphasis was placed on the belligerent passages and on a tricky distinction between "discussions" and "negotiations." Only the former, it was explained, were to be without preconditions.

A speech which could so cleverly confuse so many people at home could hardly be expected to appear straightforward and sincere to the other side. If it was intended—in the phrase currently fashionable—as a "signal" to the enemy, it seemed to signal that we were heading full speed ahead in two opposite directions at once. A railroad run by such signals would soon set a record for head-on collisions.

For a speech advertised as dropping all pre-conditions for talks, it reminded one of those accident insurance policies which cover all mishaps except those taking place in moving vehicles, on the open road, at street intersections, during air travel or while entering, or emerging from, a bathtub. First of all we are ready to talk with anyone—anyone, that is, except those whom we are fighting. This unwillingness to talk

Plane Losses Heavier Than Expected

For some weeks there has been talk in Washington that U.S. plane losses in Vietnam were alarmingly high. There was no way to check this, and one could only note the wide disparity between enemy claims and admitted losses after each raid. Now John G. Norris, who covers the Pentagon for the Washington Post, has filed a story from Saigon to his paper (April 11) which confirms the fact that U.S. plane losses have been unexpectedly heavy. He disclosed that at least 35 U.S. and South Vietnam planes [the other side claims 100] have been shot down, and that these losses were "at a sortie rate comparable to that of American aircraft in World War II against the best German and Japanese defenses." All but two of the more than 30 U.S. jets lost, according to Norris, were shot down by ground anti-aircraft defenses which proved "considerably stronger than expected." He quotes U.S. Air Force spokesmen as saying that there are 37-mm and 57-mm guns deployed around Hanoi which have not yet seen action that are radar controlled and able to shoot down planes in the clouds. "Air Force chiefs here," Norris reports, "are particularly embarrassed by the shooting down of two of the latest model F-105 [jet] fighters by aging Soviet designed Migs." He quotes one officer as saying, "Something went wrong with our people and those guys were real pros." Even without Soviet SAM missiles, it looks as if Hanoi can exact a heavy price for any attack upon it.

with the Vietcong, as Jean Lacouture notes in *Le Monde* (April 9), recalls the French unwillingness to negotiate with the Vietminh when negotiations first began in 1954. The French dismissed the Vietminh as an "agent" of China as we now dismiss the Vietcong as an "agent" of Hanoi. France finally had to deal with the rebels in Indochina and later in Algeria. Johnson will have to deal with the rebels in South Vietnam. "It would be ironic," as the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* said in an editorial April 8, "if, while insisting on South Vietnam's right to self-determination, we refused to make peace with anybody but outsiders." Negotiating its future with Peking or Hanoi is hardly the best way to build an independent South Vietnam.

As for negotiations, all sorts of preconditions were set forth

(Continued on Page Two)

(Continued from Page One)

or implied by the Baltimore speech. China was pointedly excluded from the plan for harnessing the Mekong River, though 1200 of its 2800 miles run through China, and Peking could some day divert the waters if not consulted. Hanoi is invited to take part in a Southeast Asia development plan which must seem to China a program for an American protectorate on her borders. We need only imagine how we would feel if Mexico and the Central American States were offered a Chinese development program if they promised to abjure capitalism and take part in a Chinese plan to "contain" the United States. The isolation of China is the No. 1 objective of the Administration's strategy. This peace program is a new *cordon sanitaire*, in which we offer to buy Russian and North Vietnamese participation. We still do not want to reconcile ourselves to the emergence of the new China.

An Odd Kind of Self-Determination

The second major precondition is that while, in Mr. Johnson's words, the people of South Vietnam are to be "allowed to guide their own country in their own way," they must accept "our objective," "the independence of South Vietnam," which we insist on regarding as an "independent nation." What if they prefer the reunification by free elections promised them in 1954? We talk of getting back to "the essentials" of the 1954 agreement but one of its essentials was that the military truce line on the 17th parallel was not to become a permanent boundary.

The most serious precondition is this determination not to leave the fate of South Vietnam to the free choice of its people. Over and over again I have put the question at press briefings—whether, if the rebels laid down their arms, we would be willing to abide by the result of free elections under international auspices. Neither on nor off the record have I been able to elicit a favorable response. "It's a rare student of the South Vietnamese scene," a *Wall St. Journal* staff writer observed (April 7), "who doesn't believe that ultimately there will have to be some sort of reconciliation between the Communist revolutionaries, deeply entrenched in the countryside, and the established political hierarchy in

Hanoi and The Vietcong

"The Vietcong will take direction and control from Hanoi just so long as Hanoi's objective is to aid the Vietcong in its civil war against the government of South Vietnam. But Hanoi cannot turn the civil war off like turning off water in a faucet."

—Gruening of Alaska, in the Senate, April 9.

"While Hanoi is thought to have general political and military control of the war in the South, analysts here [in Saigon] believe that the North Vietnamese leadership would have to take into account the wishes of Vietcong field commanders. The Vietcong have fought a long, difficult campaign which has given their guerrillas control of more than half of South Vietnam. Their commanders would not easily surrender their gains. If Hanoi were to enter into any peace agreement, it could assure disciplined response from all Vietcong commanders only if an avenue was kept open for their eventual assumption of power in South Vietnam."

—Seymour Topping, in The New York Times, Apr. 11.

Saigon as part of a broad program of political reform." There is no visible recognition of this anywhere in the Administration.

Mr. Johnson spoke as if our only purpose were to defend the freedom of the people of South Vietnam. But even so conservative a paper as the *Washington Star* in an editorial (April 11) voiced a "serious reservation" about the "implication" in the Baltimore speech "that the U.S. rather than the government and the people of South Vietnam are to negotiate the terms of peace for that country." This is in the pattern of our South Vietnamese policy all along, which has been to impose our views and to shut off expression of popular feeling. There has never been less democracy in Vietnam than under our overlordship. So experienced a soldier as Air Force Major Gen. Edward G. Lansdale (ret.), our foremost anti-guerrilla expert, once Diem's military adviser, the "Quiet American" of Graham Greene's novel, made a speech at Principia College in Elsah, Ill., April 9 in which he said we could not hope to win the war until we allowed the growth of representative popular institutions.

Gruening Says Peace Cannot Be Made in Vietnam Without Dealing With The Vietcong

"The refusal to concede that the fighting in South Vietnam is essentially a civil war and that to bring that fighting to a halt it is necessary to discuss the issues with the principals—the Vietcong—is tantamount to retaining a precondition to our willingness to negotiate. In addition, our continued bombing of North Vietnam is not conducive to bringing about peace in Vietnam—it is asking North Vietnam to parley with a gun at its head.

"Furthermore, our continued insistence upon a free independent South Vietnam tragically and unwarrantedly disregards the clear commitments of the Geneva Convention of 1954 for free, supervised elections designed to unify the two parts of Vietnam. The elections pledged by the Geneva accord were rejected by the South Vietnam Government with the counsel and approval and indeed at the insistence of the United States. It was a flagrant violation of a promise and commitment. Then and only then did the civil war in South Vietnam begin. . . .

"There is, in the President's speech, the obvious attempt to downgrade the fact that there is a civil war going on in South Vietnam. The President said: 'Of course, some of

the people of South Vietnam are participating in attack on their own government.' That is all the lip service the President paid to the basic civil war being waged by the Vietcong aimed at the reunification of all of Vietnam. That civil war began—let me repeat because this is crucial to the issue—when the Diem regime—at our urging—refused to carry out the provision contained in the Geneva agreement of 1954 to hold elections for the reunification of Vietnam. That was one of the underlying conditions of the Geneva agreement. The United States went back on that agreement. The civil war began and has continued with intensified fury ever since.

"It is a complete oversimplification of the problem to say, as the President did Wednesday night at Johns Hopkins University, that 'it is an attack by one country upon another.' Of course, North Vietnam is aiding the Vietcong—but on a scale nowhere near comparable to our aid to the South Vietnamese. Not only that, but in terms of measurable aggression that of the United States is and has been not only greater, but came first."

—Sen. Gruening (D., Alaska), in the Senate, April 9.

"Military actions in North Vietnam, skillful diplomatic moves and mammoth economic development schemes," he maintained, according to the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* (April 10), in what seemed a pointed reference to Johnson's program, "will not, by themselves, end the Communist revolutionary process among the people." He said only "a Vietnamese cause, with an attainable national goal closest to the hearts of the overwhelming majority of the Vietnamese, would also give members of the Viet Cong a reason to leave the Communists and join their brothers on our side." But this means the risk of a mixed if not socialist society, of a reunited nation, of a regime in which Communists, too, may play a part. The Administration would rather risk a wider war than risk self-determination for Vietnam.

Dream World Draft

The announced plan to add 160,000 men to the South Vietnamese army indicates that we are living in a dream world. Only a few days ago Jim Lucas in the Scripps-Howard press (*Washington Daily News*, April 7) provided a glimpse of the difficulties which face any effort to tighten up the draft. In the populous Mekong delta, recruiting is "only pro forma," he wrote from Saigon, "because our side controls only 6 percent" of the area. "In the Delta last spring," he related, "authorities undertook a drive to round up 16,000 draft dodgers" in the area which is under our control but it netted only 3,051. "Whole communities turned against the army. Old men and women lay down in front of the trucks taking the draft dodgers away. At Vinh Long, they started a riot and 600 of 800 detainees got away." We can only end the guerrilla war in the south by dealing with the guerrillas. To bomb the North and then China can destroy their industrial facilities but only at the cost of precipitating the same kind of popular struggle in those wider areas. If we cannot win a guerrilla war in South Vietnam, we certainly cannot win a guerrilla war in China. That is the way we are headed.

The only clear way out of this morass of folly, hatred and bloodshed is to agree, as Senator Mansfield (April 9) urged,

Facts Hidden Even From the White House

"Public relations techniques still interfere with the flow of facts about the war in Viet Nam to the American people and even to President Johnson. . . . Official reports to Washington have sometimes been doctored to eliminate or soften bad news about the way the American effort is going. . . . Johnson presumably gets unglossed facts about the day-to-day military situation in Viet Nam. But a recent official report from Saigon to Washington on the economic aid program was carefully edited before being sent off, to make the situation sound better than it was. One of the deletions was a . . . reference to corruption among Viet Nameese officials and their frequent failure to win the good will of the people. Province chiefs sometimes have acted as agents for landlords in areas newly cleared of Viet Cong. The officials have moved in with the army and begun immediately to collect back rents that had been unpaid while the area was under guerrilla control. . . . Reports from American representatives in the provinces are frank and sometimes bitter, but they are much watered down by the time they reach Washington."

—Richard Dudman, *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, Apr. 7.

to reconvene the Geneva conference on Cambodia. Prince Sihanouk has been asking for this since 1962 to guarantee his borders and neutrality. "A Geneva conference on Cambodia," the *New York Times* said in an editorial April 11, "could assemble all the countries concerned with Vietnam and permit informal exchanges." Moscow has now joined Hanoi and Peking in asking for such a meeting. This would provide a way to get around all the hurdles of face and precondition. While the conference formally dealt with Cambodia, privately both sides could feel each other out on a settlement for Vietnam. Both are heading down a blind alley; neither side can win the struggle shaping up. Peace is their mutual interest. We still believe this is what the President wants. A Cambodian conference would open the way to it.

April 12

Morse Sees "Grandiose Utopian Verbiage" But No Real Promise of Peace In LBJ's Speech

"Mr. President, the President's speech of last night is being described as the carrot that goes with the stick, the offer and the promise to go with the use of force. Presumably, the air raids on the North were designed to force North Vietnam to a conference table more or less on our terms. Now so the argument goes, we can say that we have offered to negotiate a peace and if the offer is not accepted it is the fault of someone else, not the United States.

"I heard nothing in the President's speech that suggests to me he has any negotiations in mind at all. There was a lot of lip service paid to the theory of peace, grandiose utopian verbiage was plentiful, and the dollar sign was liberally displayed, apparently in hopes of quieting criticism from abroad. But there was no language that suggested that the United States is going to return to the rule of law in Southeast Asia or that we are actively seeking a peaceful solution to its problems. There was no word that the United States plans henceforth to observe either the United Nations Charter or the Geneva Agreement of 1954.

"One cannot read that address of last night without being struck by the peculiar shifting description of whom we are fighting in Vietnam. In one place we read that: 'The first reality is that North Vietnam has attacked the

independent nations of South Vietnam.' Several paragraphs later we read that it is the deepening shadow of Communist China that is urging on the rulers in Hanoi. Yet the enemy that the United States must deal with if there are to be any peace negotiations for South Vietnam are the rebels within South Vietnam. They control much of the territory and much of the population of the South. In many districts they operate all the functions of government. We will not have any real negotiations until we talk to the people we are fighting, and we will not have a genuine offer to negotiate from the White House until the offer is directed to the people we are fighting and not the shadows behind them. . . .

"Most of all do I regret the reference the President made to the United Nations and its Secretary General. Clearly, the President sought to invoke the sanctity of the United Nations while at the same time repudiating its most vital function—that of keeping the peace. I say to the President that U Thant could use the prestige of his office, and his deep knowledge of Asia, to initiate peace talks. The good offices of the Secretary General are infinitely more meaningful to peace than to a billion dollar development program."—Sen. Morse (D., Ore.) in Senate, April 8.

The Underlying Issues in the Conviction of The Two WSPers and Russell Nixon

Is the House Committee to Be Allowed to Make Talk of Peace "Un-American"?

During the second World War, the House Un-American Activities Committee became dormant. Red-hunting was in disrepute because of the war-time alliance with the Soviet Union. The Committee's weak attitude toward Fascist elements had brought it into disrepute. To improve its public relations it asked Brookings Institution to suggest reforms in its procedures. These, as made public in 1945, included a provision for executive sessions which said, "*provided, however, that any person charged with un-American activities should be entitled, as of right, to an open hearing.*"

Closed Sessions as Dress Rehearsals

This was brought to light by David Rein, counsel for Dagmar Wilson, Donna Allen and Russell Nixon in their trial here for contempt of the Committee. All three refused to testify in secret but offered to do so in public. We hope that, as part of the campaign against HUAC, Congressmen will move to modify its rules by a resolution giving this right to witnesses. Too often the closed session protects the Committee rather than the witness, screening it from criticism and giving it the benefit of a "dress rehearsal" before deciding whether to venture a public performance. The last time it had Dagmar Wilson of Women's Strike for Peace before it in public the Committee fared ignominiously.

Federal Judge Curran found the three guilty within a few minutes after the two-day trial ended. We believe the issues deserve fuller consideration on appeal. One issue is the jurisdiction of the Committee over the Immigration and Nationality Act under which the Japanese peace worker, Prof. Yasui, was admitted for a lecture tour; the act was framed by the Judiciary Committees. A second issue was whether the executive session was properly held. A House rule provides that executive sessions may only be called on vote of a full committee; here only a subcommittee acted. A third issue is whether the Speaker, when the House is out of session, may authorize a contempt prosecution without himself passing on its validity, as the House is required to do. Speaker McCormack admitted that he merely "rubber-stamped" the citation.

The basic issues involve First Amendment rights. Even in

How to Deal With The Klan

"The brutal crimes visited upon people who were peacefully pursuing rights guaranteed by the Constitution make it imperative that the Congress strengthen the Federal criminal law. The nation cannot afford to stand by helplessly when murderers are charged with misdemeanors. An immediate investigation should be undertaken so that legislation can be drafted to protect citizens from intimidation, assault and murder whether perpetrated by members of the Ku Klux Klan or anyone else. The proper committee to formulate those laws in the House is the Committee on the Judiciary. That Committee has clear jurisdiction and has conducted all of the hearings on previous and pending Civil Rights legislation. Such hearings and investigations would be undertaken for the purpose of preparing legislation, not for the purpose of exposure."

"We oppose an investigation of the Ku Klux Klan by the House Committee on Un-American Activities because it is not the proper committee to prepare the needed legislation. Exposure for exposure's sake violates the First Amendment."

—Statement by Congressmen Brown, Burton, Edwards, Hawkins, Leggett, Roosevelt, and Roybal of California; Conyers, Diggs, Wm. Ford, Mackie, and Vivian of Michigan; Farbstein, Ottinger, Powell, Resnick, Rosenthal and Ryan of New York; Fraser (Minn.), Gonzalez (Tex.), Green (Ore.), Hicks (Wash.), Nix (Pa.), and O'Hara (Ill.) all Democrats.

upholding the Committee, as in the Barenblatt case, the Court has held that there must be a showing of Communist party activities; there was no evidence that the three defendants were acting for the Communist Party when they arranged Prof. Yasui's tour. The Court has also held that where First Amendment rights are involved, there must be a showing of a legitimate governmental interest outweighing these rights. Here the State Department, in granting Yasui's visa, had already decided that it was more important to let him be heard than to allow the U.S. to appear in Japanese eyes as a country which suppressed free discussion. If the Committee has its way, even to speak of peace would be made to seem somehow "un-American."

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